

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7241

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: PCE' CARRILLO AND THE PARACUELLOS EXECUTIONS

REF: MADRID 7174

1. DURING NOVEMBER 1936, WHEN FRANCO'S NATIONALIST TROOPS THREATENED IMMINENTLY TO ENTER REPUBLICAN-HELD MADRID, HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS OF REPUTEDLY NATIONALIST-SYMPATHIZING PRISONERS WERE TAKEN FROM VARIOUS MADRID JAILS AND, WITHOUT BENEFIT OF TRIAL, WERE EXECUTED AT PARACUELLOS DE JARAMA, 20 KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF THE CITY. THE MASS EXECUTIONS ARE A DOCUMENTED FACT AND ARE ACCEPTED AS SUCH BY ALL
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POLITICAL SECTORS.

2. AS THE ISSUE OF COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY A PART OF THE GENERAL SPANISH POLITICAL DEBATE, THIS CIVIL WAR EPISODE HAS RESURFACED, LARGELY BECAUSE OF PCE SEC GEN SANTIAGO CARRILLO'S PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION WITH THE EXECUTIONS. ACCORDING TO RICARDO DE LA CIERVA, A WIDELY RESPECTED HISTORIAN, FOR INSTANCE, THE MAJORITY OF 2,750 IDENTIFIED PARACUELLOS VICTIMS (TOTAL OF SOME 10,000) WERE EXECUTED BETWEEN NOVEMBER 6 AND NOVEMBER 15, "MOST OF THEM WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOVT OR OF MADRID'S JUNTA OF DEFENSE," ON WHICH CARRILLO SERVED AS COMMISSAR OF PUBLIC ORDER BEGINNING NOVEMBER 7.

3. DE LA CIERVA, IN EXCERPTS FROM A NEW BOOK WHICH APPEARED IN THE SEPT 18 "ABC", CONCLUDES THAT THE "COMMUNIST MEMBERS OF THE JUNTA OF DEFENSE WERE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE" FOR THE PARACUELLOS EXECUTIONS. (CARRILLO, WHO WAS AT LEAST OSTENSIBLY A SOCIALIST WHEN THE WAR BEGAN, WAS A SELF-DECLARED COMMUNIST BY THIS TIME). DE LA CIERVA IMPLIES, AND OTHERS HAVE STATED EXPLICITLY, THAT IT STRAINS CREDIBILITY TO THINK THAT CARRILLO, AS COMMISSAR OF PUBLIC ORDER, DID NOT AUTHORIZE EXECUTIONS WHICH WERE CARRIED OUT BY HIS DIRECT SUBORDINATES, ALSO COMMUNISTS, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SECURITY MUNOZ AND DELEGATE FOR PUBLIC ORDER SERRANO PONCELO.

4. CARRILLO, FOR HIS PART, HAS PUGNACIOUSLY DEFENDED HIS ROLE AS PUBLIC ORDER COMMISSAR. IN A JULY 20 INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN MADRID'S "GUADIANA" MAGAZINE, HE DENIED HAVING AUTHORIZED THE EXECUTION OF ANY PRISONERS. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE DID ORDER THE EVACUATION OF PRISONERS FROM MADRID TO REPUBLICAN-HELD VALENCIA. ALONG THE WAY ("OUTSIDE OF MY JURISDICTION"), CARRILLO CONTINUED, THE CONVOY WAS TAKEN OVER BY "UNIDENTIFIED FORCES" WHO EXECUTED THE PRISONERS BEING TRANSPORTED THEREIN.

5. COMMENT: IF CARRILLO HAD BY NOW PASSED FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE, THE PARACUELLOS EXECUTIONS WOULD LIKELY BE JUST ONE MORE NIGHTMARISH CIVIL WAR EPISODE THAT MOST

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SPANIARDS WOULD PREFER TO FORGET. HOWEVER, PARACUELLOS, BECAUSE IT IS DOCUMENTED AND REPRESENTS AND EXTREMELY CONVENIENT VEHICLE FOR BROADSIDING THE PCE, IS LIKELY TO REMAIN A POLITICAL ALBATROSS AROUND CARRILLO'S NECK, EVEN WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY. THE PCE ITSELF, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL GROUPING, WOULD LIKE THE CIVIL WAR TO BE CONSIDERED ANCIENT HISTORY, AND THIS PERIODIC REHASHING OF PARACUELLOS IN THE MEDIA IS CERTAIN TO MAKE THE

PCE LEADERSHIP EXTREMELY UNCOMFORTABLE AND, IN THE END,
MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, MAY SOONER OR LATER BRING ON
CARRILLO'S REPLACEMENT.
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